Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Concluding observations on the initial report of the Sudan*

I. Introduction

1. The Committee considered the initial report of the Sudan (CRPD/C/SDN/1) at its 371st and 372nd meetings (see CRPD/C/SR.371 and 372), held on 21 and 22 February 2018. It adopted the present concluding observations at its 385th meeting, held on 2 March 2018.

2. The Committee welcomes the initial report of the Sudan, which was prepared in accordance with the Committee's reporting guidelines, and thanks the State party for its written replies (CRPD/C/SDN/Q/1/Add.1) to the list of issues prepared by the Committee (CRPD/C/SDN/Q/1).

3. The Committee appreciates the candid dialogue held with the State party's high-level delegation during the consideration of the report, which included the Minister of Justice and the General Secretary of the Council of Persons with Disabilities.

II. Positive aspects

4. The Committee notes the adoption by the State party of the Persons with Disabilities Act in 2017 and the Children's Act in 2010 and the establishment of the National Council for Disabilities in 2009 and its restructuring in 2010.

III. Principal areas of concern and recommendations

A. General principles and obligations (arts. 1–4)

5. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The omission of psychosocial disability from the definition of disability in national legislation, in particular in the Persons with Disabilities Act of 2017;

(b) The insufficient harmonization of domestic laws with the Convention;

(c) The limited effective involvement of organizations of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes affecting them;

(d) The absence of clear plans, timelines or budgets to ensure the progressive implementation of the rights of persons with disabilities.

* Adopted by the Committee at its nineteenth session (14 February–9 March 2018).

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6. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Review the Persons with Disabilities Act of 2017 to include psychosocial disability in the definition of disability;**

(b) **Establish a calendar for the harmonization of legislation with the Convention;**

(c) **Ensure that representative organizations of person with disabilities are meaningfully involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of laws, policies and action plans and that their views are considered prior to the adoption of decisions related to them;**

(d) **Develop, in consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities, plans, timelines and budgets to ensure the implementation of the Convention in the State party.**

B. Specific rights (arts. 5–30)

Equality and non-discrimination (art. 5)

7. The Committee is concerned that the Interim Constitution of 2005 and the Persons with Disabilities Act of 2017 do not explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability and that denial of reasonable accommodation is not recognized as a prohibited ground of discrimination.

8. **The Committee recommends that the State party review article 3 of the Persons with Disabilities Act of 2017 to explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability and to ensure that denial of reasonable accommodation is recognized as a form of disability-based discrimination. It further recommends that the State party include these provisions in the forthcoming draft Constitution, so as to provide the highest legal protection against disability-based discrimination and multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination faced by persons with disabilities.**

9. The Committee is concerned about the absence of penalties in national laws, both for public and private institutions and for individuals who discriminate against persons on the basis of their disability. It is also concerned about the lack of effective legal remedies against discrimination.

10. **The Committee recommends that the State party take measures to strengthen the effectiveness of the National Commission on Human Rights and the Office of the Public Prosecutor in providing redress, including compensation, for persons who have faced discrimination on the basis of their disability and in sanctioning perpetrators.**

11. The Committee is concerned that training on non-discrimination and reasonable accommodation are not regularly imparted to public and private actors.

12. **The Committee recommends that the State party regularly train public and private actors on non-discrimination and reasonable accommodation of persons with disabilities, focusing on the human rights-based approach to disability instead of the traditional medical and charity approach.**

Women with disabilities (art. 6)

13. The Committee is concerned that women and girls with disabilities face multiple and intersectional discrimination and exclusion in all areas of life. In particular, it is concerned about:

(a) The lack of legislation protecting women and girls with disabilities from gender-based violence, particularly in the home and in institutions; the persistence of cases of neglect, violence, restraint and seclusion, sexual violence and abuse, including genital mutilation, of women and girls with disabilities; and the lack of access to shelters and adequate services for victims of such violence;

(b) The fact that national gender policies and programmes do not sufficiently include a disability perspective and that gender is not mainstreamed in disability policies;

(c) The lack of accessibility to mainstream services and reasonable accommodation for women and girls with disabilities, especially those with psychosocial and/or intellectual disabilities.

14. **In line with its general comment No. 3 (2016) on women and girls with disabilities and in the light of targets 5.1, 5.2 and 5.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen measures to address multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination against women and girls with disabilities and, in particular:**

(a) **Implement effective legal, policy and practical measures to address gender-based violence, including genital mutilation of women and girls with disabilities; prevent and investigate violations of their human rights and prosecute and punish those responsible; and ensure that those affected have access to immediate protection and accessible support services, including reasonable accommodation in mainstream services and shelter facilities;**

(b) **Include the rights of women and girls with disabilities in national gender policies and programmes, in particular the Sudanese National Strategy for Women, and mainstream gender into disability-related public measures;**

(c) **Take all measures necessary to increase the accessibility of mainstream services and reasonable accommodation for all women and girls with disabilities and ensure the involvement of organizations of women and girls with disabilities in the development, implementation and monitoring of such services.**

Children with disabilities (art. 7)

15. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The lack of measures taken to criminalize violence against children with disabilities, including corporal punishment and sexual violence, in all settings and under all circumstances;

(b) The failure to include the rights of children with disabilities in national policies, plans and programmes for children;

(c) The prevalence of stigma, discrimination against and harmful stereotypes of children with disabilities, and the persistence of traditional attitudes to seclusion and institutionalization.

16. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Criminalize violence against children with disabilities, including corporal punishment and sexual violence, under all circumstances and in all settings, including by amending the Children's Act of 2010 and the Criminal Code, and adopt and implement measures for sanctioning perpetrators;**

(b) **Mainstream the rights of children with disabilities in national policies, plans and programmes for children;**

(c) **Take measures to combat the stigmatization and stereotyping of children with disabilities within families and in society and implement strategies to prevent the abandonment, neglect, seclusion and institutionalization of children with disabilities.**

Awareness-raising (art. 8)

17. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The limited knowledge and awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities, within society in general and among public officials in particular, and the absence of a comprehensive national disability awareness policy or strategy to strengthen efforts to prevent and combat disability stereotypes and discrimination on the basis of impairment;

(b) Awareness-raising campaigns focusing on impairments rather than rights and reinforcing the charity-based approach to disability.

18. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt a national disability awareness policy or strategy to prevent and combat discrimination faced by persons with disabilities, with the participation of persons with disabilities through their representative organizations, aimed at combating stigma and stereotypes and reaffirming the value and dignity of persons with disabilities;**

(b) **Conduct training activities for communication and media professionals in line with the human rights-based approach to disability.**

Accessibility (art. 9)

19. The Committee notes that the State party has introduced accessibility standards, through the Construction Code for newly constructed buildings and the transport system, but it is concerned that the Code is not legally binding. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of a plan or a time frame to extend accessibility standards to all areas, with legally enforceable sanctions and monitoring mechanisms, and to remove existing barriers to both infrastructure and access to information and technology.

20. **In the light of article 9 of the Convention and its general comment No. 2 (2014) on accessibility, the Committee recommends that, in its efforts to meet Goal 9 and targets 11.2 and 11.17 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the State party:**

(a) **Review its legislation to provide for the mandatory application of accessibility standards in all areas, for monitoring mechanisms and for sanctions on those who fail to apply them;**

(b) **Develop, in consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities, a comprehensive national accessibility action plan with time frames, monitoring and evaluation benchmarks;**

(c) **Expedite the availability of materials produced in Braille, Easy Read, audio and other accessible formats.**

Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies (art. 11)

21. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) The absence of a national strategy for the protection of persons with disabilities in emergency and humanitarian situations;

(b) The limited support provided for persons with disabilities who are internally displaced, refugees or asylum seekers.

22. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt a disaster risk reduction strategy that is accessible and inclusive of persons with disabilities, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and ensure that humanitarian actors are trained in the human rights-based approach to disability;**

(b) **Strengthen its efforts to provide adequate support for persons with disabilities who are internally displaced, refugees or asylum seekers.**

Equal recognition before the law (art. 12)

23. The Committee is concerned about laws in the State party that continue to deny or restrict the legal capacity of persons with disabilities in many areas of life, in particular that of persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, including such provisions as the Personal Status Act of 1991, the Public Guardianship Act, article 202 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of 1991, and articles 57 to 61 of the Civil Transactions Act of 1984.

24. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Review its legislation, including the above-mentioned Acts, to abolish the deprivation of legal capacity on the basis of impairment;**

(b) **Introduce supported decision-making arrangements that respect the autonomy, will and preferences of persons with disabilities and raise awareness of such arrangements among persons with disabilities, their families and society;**

(c) **Conduct capacity-building activities for public officials on the right to equal recognition before the law of persons with disabilities and on supported decision-making arrangements.**

Access to justice (art. 13)

25. The Committee regrets the lack of information regarding access to justice for persons with disabilities. It is particularly concerned about the lack of accessibility of the judicial system, owing to insufficient knowledge about disability issues within the judicial and law enforcement sectors; the lack of adequate procedural accommodations; the lack of judicial information in accessible formats; and the lack of accessibility to police and judicial premises.

26. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Take measures to implement in practice the Ministry of Justice's circular of 2016 requiring courts to facilitate trial procedures and procedural accommodation for persons with disabilities and to extend such measures to the police and prosecution services;**

(b) **Adopt measures to ensure that all persons with disabilities, in particular persons with psychosocial and/or intellectual disabilities and persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, have access to justice and to information and communication in accessible formats, such as Braille, tactile, Easy Read and sign language;**

(c) **Conduct training for law enforcement personnel on the human rights-based approach to disability.**

Liberty and security of the person (art. 14)

27. The Committee is concerned about article 49 of the Criminal Code, which may lead to the arbitrary institutionalization of persons with disabilities, and about the enduring practice of institutionalizing persons with disabilities against their will and for extended periods of time, including in institutions run by traditional healers.

28. **Taking into consideration its guidelines on article 14 (2015), the Committee recommends that the State party review article 49 of the Criminal Code to ensure that persons with disabilities are not arbitrarily institutionalized in the context of criminal procedures, and take measures to eradicate the forced institutionalization of persons with disabilities, in particular persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, including in institutions run by traditional healers.**

Freedom from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (art. 15)

29. The Committee is concerned that persons with disabilities are subjected to involuntary medical treatment, including by non-certified traditional healers, and continue to be physically restrained, in particular persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities.

30. **The Committee recommends that the State party take measures to:**

(a) **Ensure that medical treatment is carried out with the free, prior and informed consent of persons with disabilities;**

(b) **Train medical personnel on the human rights-based approach to disability;**

(c) **Prohibit treatment by non-certified traditional healers;**

(d) **Ensure that persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities are not physically restrained.**

31. The Committee is concerned that female genital mutilation is still not criminalized in the State party. It regrets the lack of information on women and girls with disabilities in the national strategy 2008–2018 to prevent female genital mutilation and other awareness-raising initiatives.

32. **The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to criminalize female genital mutilation and to include women and girls with disabilities in all measures to fight and prevent the practice.**

Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse (art. 16)

33. The Committee is concerned about the absence of information on the investigation, prosecution and sanctioning of cases of violence against persons with disabilities.

34. **The Committee recommends that the State party duly record, investigate, prosecute and sanction cases of violence against persons with disabilities throughout the criminal and judicial processes.**

Protecting the integrity of the person (art. 17)

35. The Committee is concerned that sterilization without the free and informed consent of women and girls with disabilities is not explicitly prohibited.

36. **The Committee recommends that the State party explicitly prohibit the forced sterilization of persons with disabilities, in particular women and girls, and criminalize this practice.**

Liberty of movement and nationality (art. 18)

37. The Committee is concerned about restrictions imposed on persons with disabilities limiting their freedom of movement, whereby persons with physical disabilities require a medical report as a precondition for travelling by air and persons with psychosocial and/or intellectual disabilities require approval from their guardians if they wish to travel.

38. **The Committee recommends that the State party abolish the requirements that impede the freedom of movement of persons with disabilities within and outside its territory.**

Living independently and being included in the community (art. 19)

39. The Committee notes with concern the absence of a strategy to promote and ensure the transition to full independent living for all persons with disabilities within the community, including with the support of personal assistance programmes. It is also concerned that persons with psychosocial disabilities are still forced to live in reformatories without their consent, ostensibly in the interests of ensuring close supervision and providing access to better health care and treatment.

40. **In the light of its general comment No. 5 (2017) on living independently and being included in the community, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt the legal and political measures necessary to ensure the right of all persons with disabilities to independent living and inclusion in the community, including by providing for personal assistance and assistive aids;**

(b) **Adopt the measures necessary to ensure that persons with disabilities have a legal entitlement to a sufficient personal budget for independent living that takes into account the additional costs related to disability, and redirect resources from institutionalization to community-based services.**

Personal mobility (art. 20)

41. The Committee notes the efforts undertaken by the State party to promote access to assistive devices but is concerned about the challenges faced by persons with disabilities in acquiring necessary mobility aids and assistive devices, including assistance technologies, as their cost remains prohibitive.

42. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt measures to ensure the provision of mobility and assistive devices, including assistance technologies, at affordable cost, for persons with disabilities.**

Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information (art. 21)

43. The Committee is concerned about how little public information is available to persons with disabilities in accessible formats, such as sign language interpretation, tactile, Braille, Easy Read and other alternative forms of communication, in both public and private media outlets. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of recognition of sign language as an official language.

44. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Consider adopting a bill on the right to access information and eliminate any limitation that hinders the exercise by persons with disabilities of their freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas on an equal basis with others, by, inter alia, ensuring that website owners and designers make their websites accessible to persons with disabilities, especially blind and visually impaired persons;**

(b) **Adopt concrete measures to recognize sign language as an official language and to make provision for it to be taught in schools; develop a pool of qualified sign language interpreters, and teachers using tactile, Braille and Easy Read skills; and ensure that television stations provide news and other programmes in accessible formats, especially for deaf and hard-of-hearing persons.**

Respect for home and the family (art. 23)

45. The Committee is concerned about provisions in the Personal Status Act of 1991 that limit the rights of persons with disabilities to form families and exercise their parental rights by stipulating legal capacity or the consent of their guardian as a prerequisite.

46. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Review the Personal Status Act of 1991 to ensure that persons with disabilities can exercise their rights with regard to marriage, family, parenthood and relationships on an equal basis with others and on the basis of their free and informed consent;**

(b) **Adopt measures to support parents with disabilities to exercise their parental rights at home and to eliminate the social stigma directed against persons with disabilities with regard to marriage and parenthood.**

Education (art. 24)

47. While noting the progress made in the Persons with Disabilities Act of 2017 regarding access to education, the Committee is concerned about:

(a) The low school enrolment and retention rates of children with disabilities;

(b) The continuing approach to segregated schools, which results in the exclusion of children and persons with disabilities from the mainstream educational system on the basis of impairment;

(c) Discrimination against children with psychosocial and/or intellectual impairments in access to education;

(d) The limited support for learners with disabilities, including in the areas of vocational training and tertiary education.

48. **In line with the Committee's general comment No. 4 (2014) on the right to inclusive education and targets 4.5 and 4.8 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Take prompt measures to ensure that all children with disabilities have access to inclusive, high-quality and free primary and secondary education, and provide reasonable accommodation to ensure that education is available for such children;**

(b) **Take measures to establish an inclusive education system at all levels, to include preschool, primary, secondary and tertiary education and vocational training, without discrimination and on an equal basis with others;**

(c) **Remove the barriers to access to education and promote retention for children with psychosocial and/or intellectual impairments by, inter alia, establishing a permanent programme for the training of teachers in inclusive education and the development of methodological tools for teaching, together with the resources necessary for its implementation;**

(d) **Implement initiatives and public-private partnerships to design accessible pedagogical tools and teaching methods and to provide students with disabilities with access to new technologies and the Internet;**

(e) **To explicitly and immediately enforce the prohibition of exclusion of learners with disabilities from regular schools on the basis of their impairments.**

Health (art. 25)

49. The Committee is concerned about the overall lack of accessibility of mainstream health services. In particular, it is concerned at:

(a) The general lack of awareness among medical personnel about the rights of persons with disabilities and the absence of training for such personnel in other communication methods;

(b) The absence of protocols to ensure the free and informed consent of persons with disabilities with regard to health services;

(c) Barriers faced by persons with disabilities in obtaining access to health services, especially in rural areas, as a result of the geographical remoteness of health centres, the physical obstacles involved and the lack of information in accessible formats;

(d) The lack of information on sexual and reproductive health in accessible formats for persons with disabilities, including women and girls;

(e) The limited availability of specialized health-care services relating to disabilities and the high cost of obtaining access to them.

50. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt a strategy to ensure access to health services by persons with disabilities, including by training medical personnel in the rights of persons with disabilities, in the human rights-based approach to disability and in alternative communication methods;**

(b) **Adopt health protocols aimed at ensuring the realization of the right of persons with disabilities to give their free and informed consent to medical treatments;**

(c) **Take measures to ensure the availability and accessibility of health-care facilities and services, including in rural areas, by removing physical obstacles to health centres and providing information in accessible formats;**

(d) **Ensure the dissemination of information on sexual and reproductive health rights in appropriate formats for all persons with disabilities, and the availability of gender- and age-sensitive services, including in rural areas;**

(e) **Promote the availability and affordability of specialized health-care services related to disabilities.**

Habilitation and rehabilitation (art. 26)

51. The Committee is concerned that there is a lack of adequate legislation in the State party to ensure access to habilitation and rehabilitation services and that the measures taken are not in compliance with the Convention, inasmuch as they maintain a medical-oriented approach and do not address the required changes in society and in education.

52. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt the legislation necessary to provide access to habilitation and rehabilitation services, ensuring that they are human rights-based and involve organizations of persons with disabilities.**

Work and employment (art. 27)

53. The Committee is concerned about the absence of adequate and enforceable measures to ensure compliance with policies and strategies to promote livelihood and employment opportunities in the public and private sector for persons with disabilities.

54. **The Committee recommends that the State party take effective and affirmative measures to provide for the employment of persons with disabilities in the public and private sectors, to ensure that the open labour market is inclusive and accessible and to provide for the availability of reasonable accommodation.**

55. The Committee notes that article 24 (7) of the Civil Service Act of 2007 establishes a 2 per cent quota for the employment of persons with disabilities. It is, however, concerned that this provision is not legally or administratively enforceable and allows for exceptions based on the "nature of the job and the nature of the disability".

56. **The Committee recommends that the State party review article 24 (7) of the Civil Service Act of 2007 to remove exceptions to the quota system based on the "nature of the job and the nature of the disability" and to make the 2 per cent quota administratively and legally enforceable.**

Adequate standard of living and social protection (art. 28)

57. The Committee is concerned that social protection and poverty alleviation measures for families in vulnerable circumstances do not meet the basic needs of persons with disabilities. The Committee is furthermore concerned that persons with disabilities lack the resources to meet the additional costs of disability.

58. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Review its social protection and poverty alleviation schemes with the aim of guaranteeing an adequate standard of living for persons with disabilities, including through compensation schemes in the form of allowances that will enable persons with disabilities to meet disability-related expenses;**

(b) **Pay attention to the links between article 28 of the Convention and target 10.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, to empower and promote the economic inclusion of all persons, irrespective of their disability status.**

Participation in political and public life (art. 29)

59. The Committee is concerned about:

(a) Electoral laws excluding persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities from the election process by establishing "mental capacity" as a prerequisite for the right to vote and to stand for public office;

(b) The inaccessibility of the voting environment and the absence of electoral materials and information in accessible formats such as Braille, sign language and Easy Read;

(c) The lack of training for election officials to address the requirements of persons with disabilities at polling centres;

(d) The lack of support for persons with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities to exercise their right to vote and stand for election.

60. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Review its electoral laws, in line with the Committee's general comment No.1 (2014) on equal recognition before the law, with a view to including persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities in electoral processes and removing the requirements that prevent persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities from exercising their right to vote and stand for office;**

(b) **Adopt measures to ensure the accessibility of the voting environment, including the provision of electoral materials and information in accessible formats for all persons with disabilities;**

(c) **Conduct appropriate training for election officials on the rights of persons with disabilities, at all stages of the electoral process, to enable their effective participation in electoral and political processes;**

(d) **Provide adequate support for persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities to enable them to exercise their right to vote and stand for public office.**

Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport (art. 30)

61. The Committee is concerned about the State party's insufficient efforts to support participation by persons with disabilities in cultural, recreational, leisure and sporting activities. The Committee is concerned that the State party has yet to ratify the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled.

62. **The Committee recommends that the State party take steps to support and encourage the participation of persons with disabilities, including children, in cultural, recreational, leisure and sporting activities. It also recommends that the State party promptly ratify the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled.**

C. Specific obligations (arts. 31–33)

Statistics and data collection (art. 31)

63. The Committee is concerned about the lack of comparable disaggregated data on persons with disabilities in all sectors of the State party.

64. **The Committee recommends that the State party include the Washington Group Short Set of Questions on Disability in the upcoming census, include disability matters in the monitoring indicators for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and pay attention to the links between article 31 of the Convention and target 17.18 of the Sustainable Development Goals to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data, disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographical location and other characteristics relevant in its national context.**

International cooperation (art. 32)

65. The Committee is concerned about the lack of effective consultation with persons with disabilities, or their participation and inclusion, through their representative organizations, in international cooperation programmes.

66. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt measures to ensure effective participation, inclusion and consultation with persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations, in international cooperation programmes.**

National implementation and monitoring (art. 33)

67. The Committee is concerned about the lack of resources available for the effective comprehensive monitoring conducted by the independent monitoring framework

established in accordance with article 33 (2) of the Convention. This limits the support provided for organizations of persons with disabilities to participate in the monitoring process.

68. **The Committee recommends that the State party provide sufficient funding for monitoring frameworks and organizations of persons with disabilities to enable them to monitor the implementation of the Convention across the State party, taking into account the guidelines on independent monitoring frameworks and their participation in the work of the Committee (CRPD/C/1/Rev.1, annex).**

IV. Follow-up

Dissemination of information

69. **The Committee requests the State party to provide information, within 12 months of the adoption of the present concluding observations and in accordance with article 35 (2) of the Convention, on the measures taken to implement the Committee's recommendations contained in paragraph 48 (e) on the prohibition of exclusion of learners with disabilities from regular schools on the basis of their impairment.**

70. **The Committee recommends that the State party transmit the present concluding observations for consideration and action to members of the Government and parliament, officials in relevant ministries, the judiciary and members of relevant professional groups, such as education, medical and legal professionals, as well as to local authorities, the private sector and the media, using modern social communication strategies.**

71. **The Committee strongly encourages the State party to involve civil society organizations, in particular organizations of persons with disabilities, in the preparation of its periodic report.**

72. **The Committee requests the State party to disseminate the present concluding observations widely, including to non-governmental organizations and organizations of persons with disabilities, and to persons with disabilities themselves and members of their families, in national and minority languages, including sign language, and in accessible formats, and to make them available on the government website on human rights.**

Next periodic report

73. **The Committee requests the State party to submit its combined second to fourth periodic reports by 24 May 2023 and to include in them information on the implementation of the recommendations made in the present concluding observations. The Committee also requests the State party to consider submitting the above-mentioned reports under the Committee's simplified reporting procedure, according to which the Committee prepares a list of issues at least one year prior to the due date set for the report of a State party. The replies of a State party to such a list of issues constitute its report.**